

NEWS

United States Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney, District of New Jersey
401 Market Street, Fourth Floor
Camden, New Jersey 08101



Christopher J. Christie, U.S. Attorney

More Information? Contact the Assistant U.S. Attorney or other contact listed below to see if more information is available.

News on the Internet: News Releases, related documents and advisories are posted short-term at our website, along with links to our archived releases at the Department of Justice in Washington, D.C. ***Go to:*** <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/nj/press/>

Assistant U.S. Attorney
ALLEN HARBERG, JR.
856-757-5231

land0105.rel
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Jan. 5, 2007

A Swedesboro Man Admits Defrauding Bank of \$550,000

(More)

Greg Reinert, PAO
Public Affairs Office

856-757-5233
973-645-2888

Breaking News (NJ) <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/nj/press/>

CAMDEN – A Swedesboro man pleaded guilty today to wire fraud and money laundering charges for his scheme to utilize the identity of another individual to defraud Commerce Bank of more than \$550,000, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

Leon Land, 42, a.k.a. Leon Foreman, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Robert B. Kugler to a two-count Information. Judge Kugler continued the defendant's detention pending sentencing, which is scheduled for April 26 at 9 a.m.

On Aug. 25, 2006, Land was escorted back to the United States from the Dominican Republic by Special Agents of the FBI to face charges arising out of his fraudulent scheme. Land pleaded guilty to a two-count Information charging one count each of wire fraud and money laundering.

At his plea hearing, Land admitted that he applied for and obtained four loans from Commerce Bank using the Social Security number of another individual and by making other false statements on the loan applications. Land funneled the proceeds of the four loans into a checking account that he had established using the same false identifying information, he admitted. Land then depleted that account and caused the four loans to go into default, he admitted. Shortly after that account was depleted, Land left the United States and traveled to the Dominican Republic.

The charge of wire fraud carries a maximum statutory penalty of 20 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. The charge of money laundering carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

In determining the actual sentence, Judge Kugler will consult the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, a defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

Parole has been abolished in the federal system and thus defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all the time imposed by the court.

Christie credited Special Agents of the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Patricia J. Haynes, in Newark, and Special Agents of the FBI's Cherry Hill Resident Agency, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge J.P. Weis, in Philadelphia, for investigation of the case.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Allen Harberg.

-end-

Defense Counsel: Jeffrey Zucker, Esq. Camden